

## 3.4 BUDDHIST SYMBOLS AND ICONS



*Figure 5.15*



# BUDDHIST SYMBOLS AND ICONS

- Buddhism is very rich in symbols, many recognized all over the world
- Since there are so many abstract teachings and they tend to be hard to grasp , one way to help clarify them is to use symbols

# BUDDHA

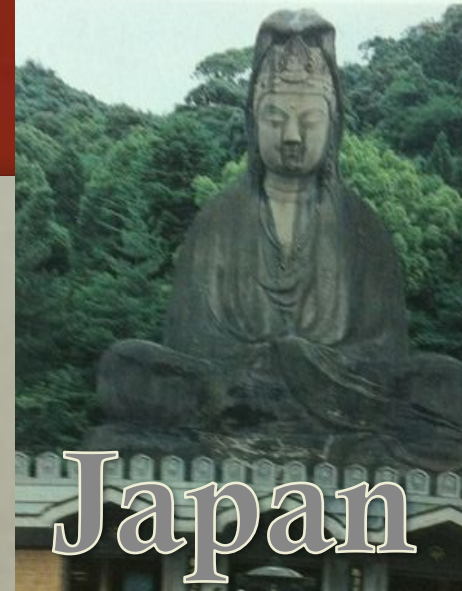
Portrayals of the Buddha differ all around the world

Often appears standing or in the yoga position

Buddha himself is not worshipped, followers worship the statue as a sign of respect



dha Images





# MUDRAS

- Hand gestures called Mudras are important Buddhist icons
- Often used during meditation or seen on Buddha images
- The underlying idea of **mudras** is that we can tell someone's state of mind

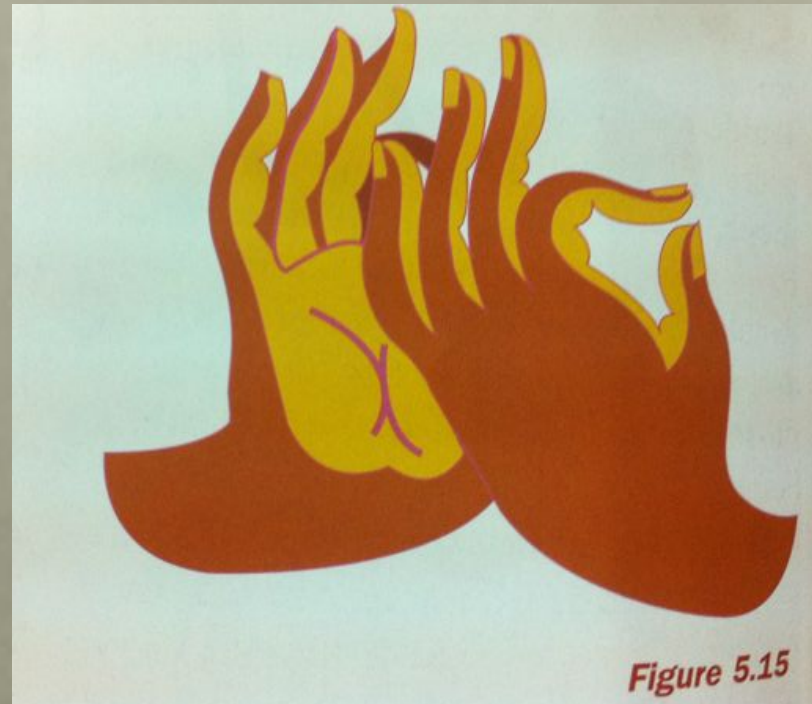


Figure 5.15

# STUPA

- Domed-shaped mounds that house the relics of the Buddha or other holy figures
- Insides of the stupa is decorated with paintings and carvings of the life of the Buddha



# STUPA

## WHAT DO YOU FIND INSIDE?

HOLY RELICS





# STUPA

## WHAT DO YOU FIND INSIDE?

CLAY SACRED  
STATUES



MEDICINES, HERBS  
BLESSING SUBSTANCES



# THE LOTUS FLOWER



- Soon after enlightenment, the Buddha had a vision of the human race as a bed of lotus flowers
- Some were in the mud, some were emerging from it, and others were about to bloom

All people have the ability to develop their potential and rise from an undesirable life





# BUDDHAPADA

- Representations of the Buddha's footprints
- Footprints in “all lands that his teaching would be acknowledged



# DHARMACHAKRA

- The wheel of the law. The eight spokes represent the eightfold path.



# THE WHEEL OF LIFE





# MANDALA

- Means circle
- Visual aid for concentration and a device for meditation
- The viewing of a mandala generates healing energy and brings the viewer closer to enlightenment



# THE TRIPLE JEWEL

- A refuge is a place of safety from danger
- The Buddha established three refuges to help with existence
- The purpose of these refuges is to guide followers along the right path and help them with their journey

# THE TRIPLE JEWEL

- They are
  - The Buddha (the guide)
  - The Dharma (the path)
  - The Sangha (companions and teachers)
- For a Buddhist, taking refuge is the first step to enlightenment
- Lay people take refuge in the triple jewel by reciting:



# THE TRIPLE JEWEL

- “ I go to the Buddha for refuge, I go to the Dharma for refuge, I go to the Sangha for refuge